

Change Policy

General Principles

The University recognises its contractual obligations to applicants and students to provide a programme in accordance with previously published information about the programme and its organisation. This is information that forms part of the agreement with the student.

The University's default position is there should be no changes to material information concerning the campus location of a programme or the programme or module structure.

As a general principle, changes should be implemented for the next entering cohort and not for any current students. Modifications affecting current students and prospective students, once the admissions cycle has begun, require particularly careful consideration and consultation.

The University will take account of the nature of the student contract when preparing prospectus entries and placing information on websites. There is a need for particular attention paid to:

- (i) the inclusion of compulsory modules and the range of option modules;
- (ii) module choice, particularly the need to focus on the range and likely areas of option modules; and
- (iii) methods of assessment, particularly the balance between coursework and examinations
- (iv) the nature of the teaching methods used, the type and volume of contact hours provided, and the implications for timetabling

Any changes are to be in accordance with this Policy, and to follow the Programme Modifications procedures published by the Quality and Standards Office.

Policy on Regulatory, Beneficial or Non-material Changes

The University's overall policy to programme and module changes is that changes will only be approved if they

- (a) do not result in a change in the published material information, or;
- (b) are regulatory changes or changes due to circumstances outside the University's control that it could not plan for;
- (c) are demonstrably beneficial to students; or
- (d) where all affected students (including students who have already begun the programme and will be affected in future years) give informed consent to the changes

The University will, in all cases, consult students in advance of making any regulatory, beneficial or non-material changes. Following the consultation, the University may determine the changes to be a change to published material information.

Policy on Changes to Published Material Information

For **applicants** where there is a change to published material information

1. There is to be a notification at the earliest possible opportunity to applicants of the decision to change the programme, setting out the nature of the change, the reasons and the impact. This is to be conveyed in such a way the applicant can decide whether the programme remains suitable, and whether the applicant should consider an alternative programme.
2. Where reasonable, the University will offer the applicant affected by the change a suitable replacement programme.
3. The University will include a notification of a right to withdraw the application. In the event of a withdrawal, there would be appropriate refund of course fees already paid.

For **students** on a programme where there is a change to published material information

1. There is to be notification at the earliest possible opportunity to those students affected by a decision to propose a change to the programme in a way that results in a variation of the material information previously published
2. The University will engage in appropriate, active consultation, that can be evidenced, to seek the views of each student on the programme potentially affected by the proposal to change the programme.
3. The University will consider the expressed views of all students before deciding whether or not to proceed with the proposal or to proceed with a modified proposal.
4. Where reasonable, the University will offer a suitable replacement programme to any student affected by the decision to change the programme who remains dissatisfied with the changed programme offering.
5. Where appropriate, the University will offer any student affected by the decision to change the programme who remains dissatisfied with the changed programme offering the right to withdraw from the programme. In the event of a withdrawal, and where applicable, there will be an appropriate refund of course fees.

Nature of Changes to Material Information

Examples that are not likely to represent changes to material information

- (a) The addition of a new option module with no associated withdrawals of any other module option
- (b) Change of programme director, module coordinator or School or programme delivering the module
- (c) Responsibilities of members of staff
- (d) Shared teaching involving undergraduates across different Schools or Faculties
- (e) Changes to the allocation of notional hours between forms of activity that do not affect the contact hours
- (f) Changes to the module aims
- (g) Changes to the module learning outcomes, provided there is no impact on the overall programme learning outcomes
- (h) Changes to the assessment for individual modules, provided there is no significant impact on the overall balance of assessment between examinations, coursework, practical assessments and placement
- (i) Minor changes to module content where there is no impact on the intended learning outcomes of the overall programme or where it reflects changes to keep abreast of current knowledge or meet the requirements of regulatory bodies
- (j) Arrangements for teaching sessions
- (k) Submission dates for assignments and dates for assessments
- (l) Arrangements for the submission and return of work, and marking and feedback on assessments, provided University requirements are met
- (m) Timetabling arrangements, provided they do not require attendance at campus of that advertised
- (n) Placement arrangements

Examples that are likely to represent changes to material information

- (a) Location of study, including campus
- (b) Length of the programme
- (c) Change to the programme title
- (d) Change to entry requirements or criteria
- (e) Changes to the title of both compulsory and option modules
- (f) Changes to the credit value of a module
- (g) Changes to the credit level of a module
- (h) Content changes that affect the intended learning outcomes of the overall programme
- (i) Significant changes to the balance of assessment methods in use across the programme such as between examinations, coursework, practical assessments and placements
- (j) Withdrawal of modules and suspension of the offering of modules for a particular year
- (k) Changes that could be seen to disadvantage students (for instance, reduction in contact hours and the balance of activities)
- (l) Changes in accreditation by a professional, statutory or regulatory body
- (m) Changes in special regulations or programme conditions that a student might find surprising